

Media Release
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News Media Bargaining Code Pushes Digital Platforms To Pay A Fair Price For Australian Journalism

The News Media Bargaining Code, introduced just over 12 months ago, has been broadly successful in driving commercial negotiations, however further improvements could be made, according to Free TV Australia's [submission](#) to a review of the Code.

Bridget Fair, CEO of Free TV said, "While digital platforms have not yet been designated under the Code, these valuable commercial arrangements would not have been possible without the incentives of the framework.

"For a long time, digital platforms have been refusing to pay a fair price for news content, despite the value it creates on their services. It is critical that the bargaining code legislation be maintained, to support the sustainability of Australian media.

"The digital platforms – Google, Facebook, and their subsidiaries, continue to hold a dominant position in search and social media markets.

"The News Media Bargaining Code, with its final offer arbitration framework, has become an international model for addressing the competitive imbalance in countries including Canada and the United Kingdom".

Free TV also makes a number of recommendations for improvements to the code framework, particularly as commercial arrangements come up for renewal. These include:

- a statement of expectations on digital platforms that establishes an intention to designate if commercial arrangements are not entered and maintained with all relevant news media companies;
- any designation intention including social video platforms like YouTube;
- removing the 'significant contribution' test in the designation criteria to reinforce that all eligible news media businesses are able to seek agreements under the Code if the Treasurer determines to designate a digital platform service; and
- committing to two-yearly reviews of the operation of the framework.

Ms Fair said, "Future reviews of the Code should also consider the definition of core and covered news content and the potential for streamlining the ACMA registration process.

"As the framework continues to mature, it is important that it continues to reflect the evolving nature of Australian media businesses".

ENDS



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